

ESD Update

OCTOBER 13, 2021

ESD Agenda

General update

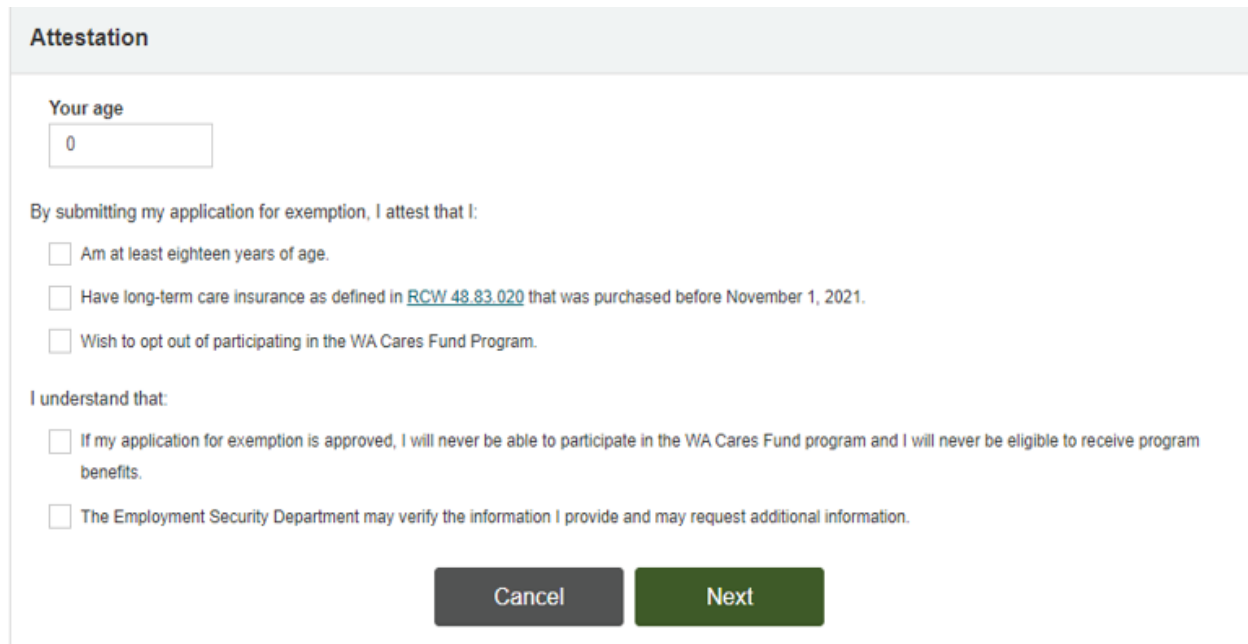
- WA CARES update
- Federal CARES Act closeout
- Status of claims and adjudication
- ESD Improvement Plan: 5193 update

General Update

Cami Feek, Commissioner

WA CARES FUND

WA Cares Fund began accepting exemption applications on Friday, October 1 and will continue through December 2022. ESD has received 126,980 applications as of October 12.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Attestation". It includes a text input field for "Your age" with the number "0" entered. Below this, there is a statement: "By submitting my application for exemption, I attest that I:". This is followed by three unchecked checkboxes with the following text: "Am at least eighteen years of age.", "Have long-term care insurance as defined in [RCW 48.83.020](#) that was purchased before November 1, 2021.", and "Wish to opt out of participating in the WA Cares Fund Program." Below these is another statement: "I understand that:", followed by two more unchecked checkboxes: "If my application for exemption is approved, I will never be able to participate in the WA Cares Fund program and I will never be eligible to receive program benefits." and "The Employment Security Department may verify the information I provide and may request additional information." At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Cancel" and "Next".

Process:

- Employee accesses the exemption form through the online portal on the WA Cares website, answers the five personal questions, and uploads ID documents.
- If all boxes are checked and the ID is acceptable, the application will be approved.
- Employee will receive a letter by email and through the portal to give to any current and future employer.

Federal benefits expired September 6

How did this impact constituents who requested benefits the week of September 4?

- **PUA** – No longer receiving benefits if they don't qualify for regular unemployment. 63,806 claimants
- **PEUC** – No longer receiving extra weeks of benefits when regular claim expires. 87,198 claimants
- **FPUC** – No longer receiving bonus \$300 with weekly benefit checks. 201,002 claimants

Estimate that 75% of previous claims are not eligible for current benefits.

What about claims in appeals?

Federal government allows payment after September 4 if:

- Claim is allowed to be backdated.
- Payment is held while an issue is adjudicated.
- A denial of benefits is overturned on appeal.

\$21.2 Billion

Total paid

For payments made since
March 8, 2020 – Sept. 4, 2021

\$ 9,482,951,257

Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation

\$ 5,574,763,260

State unemployment insurance

\$ 2,585,916,395

Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation

\$ 2,509,319,274

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance

\$ 731,288,119

Lost Wages Assistance

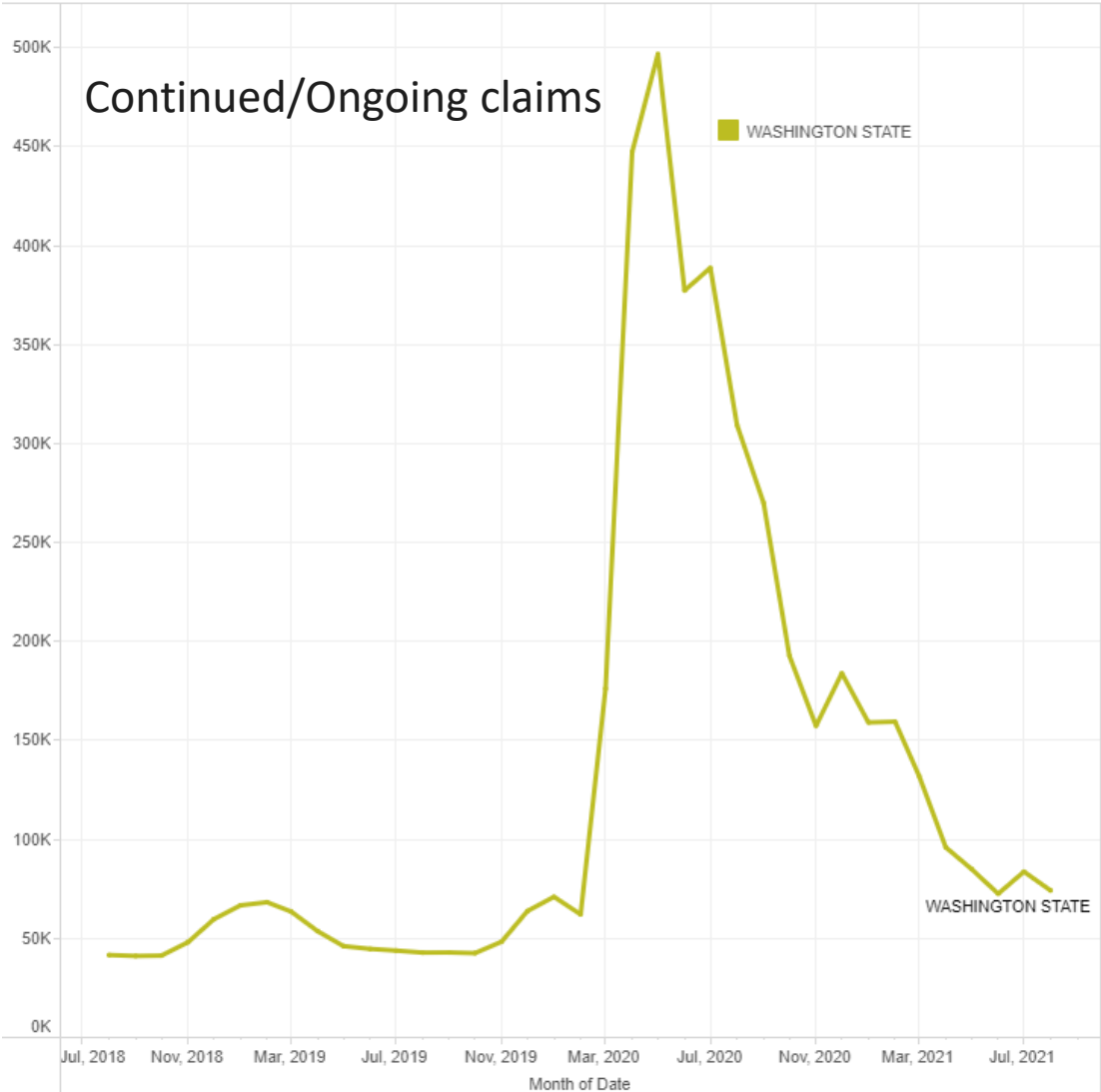
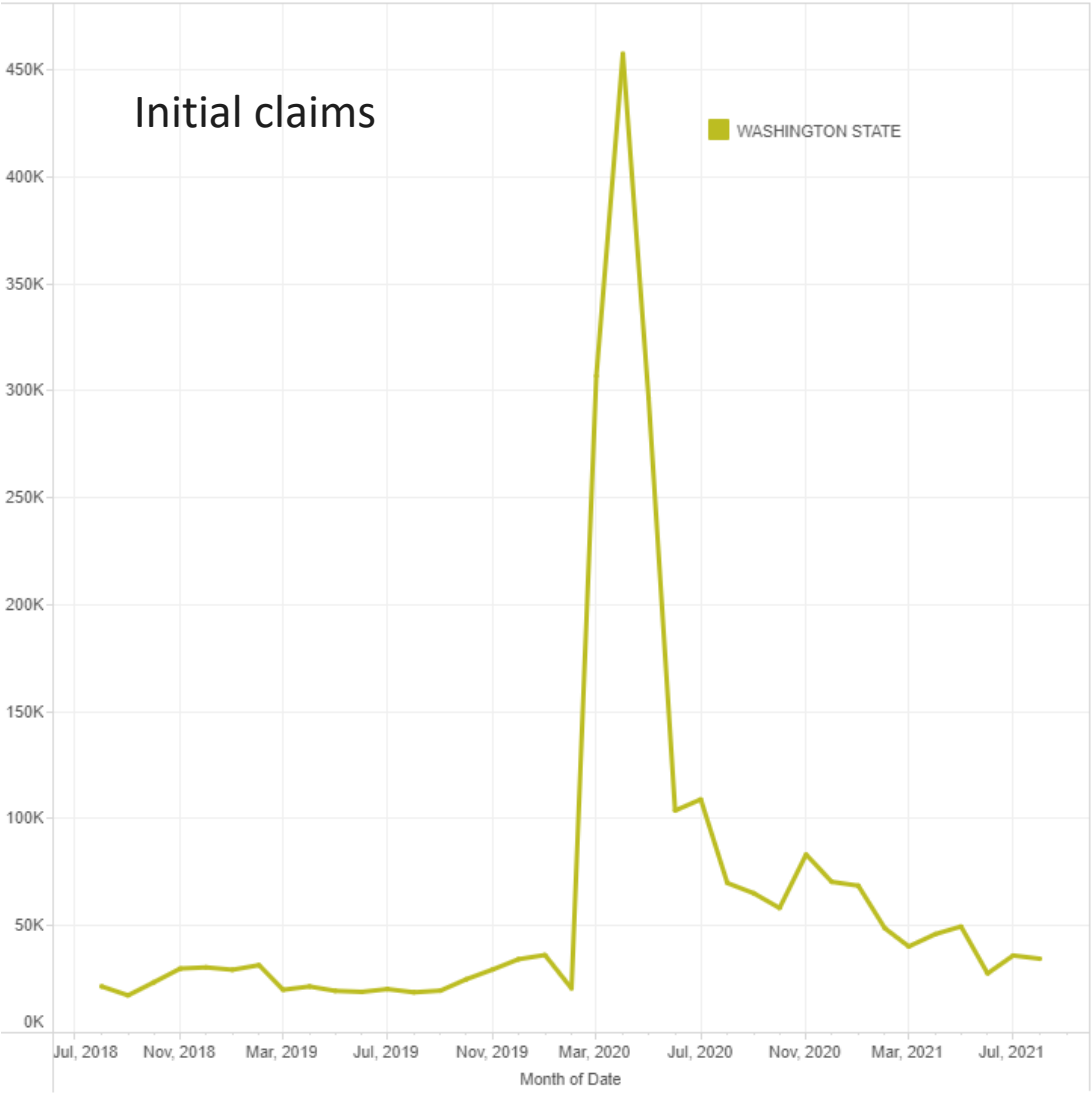
\$ 320,201,596

Extended Benefits

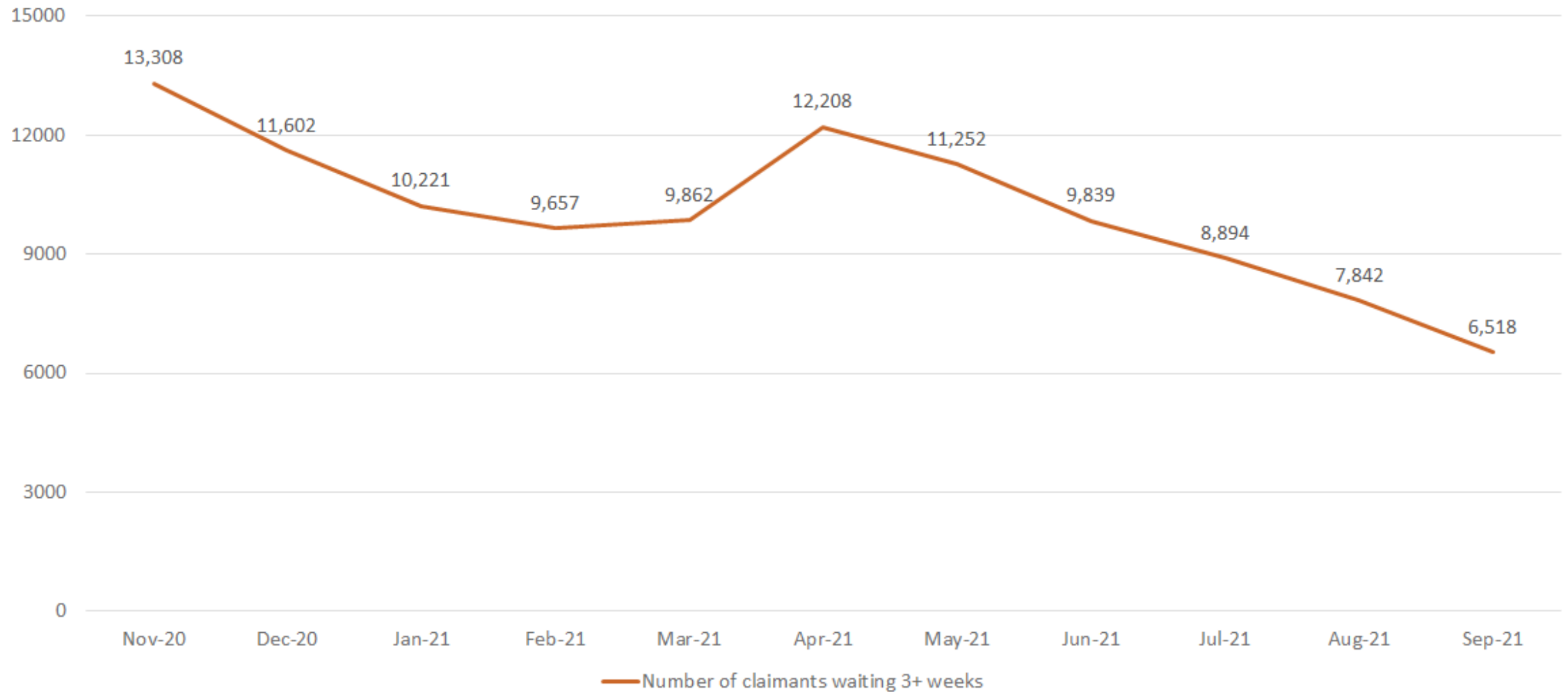
FPUC, PUA, PEUC, and EB are federal unemployment programs made available through the federal CARES Act.
LWA was federally funded through a temporary emergency measure.

\$21.2 Billion paid (March 8, 2020- Sept. 4, 2021): \$9,482,951,257 FPUC | \$5,574,763,260 UI | \$2,585,916,395 PEUC | \$2,509,319,274 PUA |
\$731,288,119 LWA | \$320,201,596 EB

COVID -19 impact on UI



Claimants waiting 3+ weeks for first payment



Progress on the backlog

Good News

- ESD was very successful in addressing the oldest workload.
- ESD is resolving over 4,500 cases per day.
- By September 30, ESD completed 99% of all cases opened as of June 1, 2021.
- Increased adjudication capacity due to the expiration of federal benefits

Challenges

- New work arriving as fast as we are closing old work.
- Over past month, averaging about 108,000 open cases.
- Wild card: Effects of Washington, federal, and employer vaccine mandates may see significantly more quits and discharges in the near future. Claims will be determined by the merits of each individual case.

ESD system improvements: ESSB 5193

During the 2021 session, the Legislature passed ESSB 5193, which included five major system overhauls for the Employment Security Department. ESD must submit quarterly reports on this entire body of this work, in addition to one annual report.

The first quarterly report was submitted September 1, 2021 and is available at <https://esd.wa.gov/newsroom/legislative-resources>

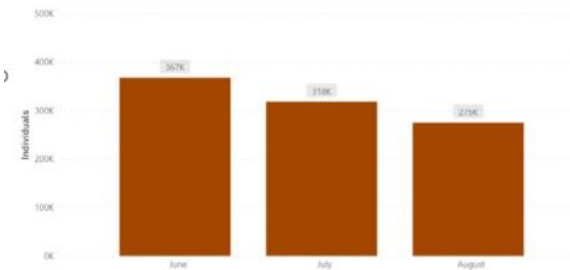
ESD system improvement: Status Update

Deliverables	Percent Complete	Target Completion Date
#1 Unemployment Insurance dashboard	100%	October 2021
#2 Letters Project (Phase 1)	50%	October 2021
#3 Dedicated Phone Line	90%	December 2021
#4 Adjudicator Reserve Training Pool		
Curriculum	100%	July 2021
Pilot	100%	August 2021
Recruitment	50%	March 2022
Annual Report	100%	October 2021
#5 Advisory Committee	90%	December 2021
Quarterly Report	100%	September 2021

ESSB 5193: Dashboard

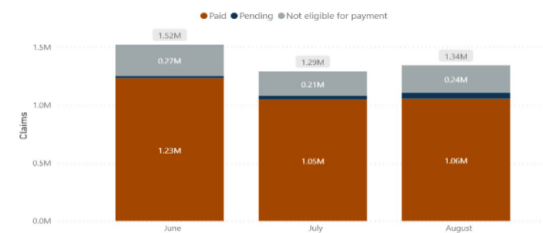
A glossary of terms can be found at the dashboard homepage: <https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment/dashboard>.

Chart 1: Unique individuals filing claims



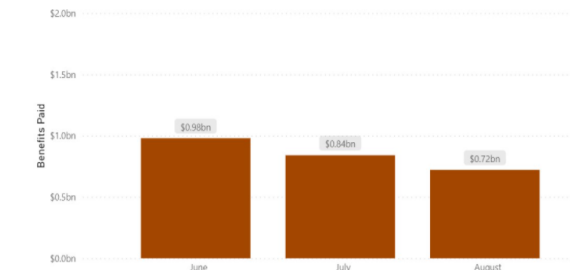
Total number of individuals filing unemployment claims per month. Claims include all unemployment claims for regular unemployment insurance (UI), and federally funded pandemic related claims (PUA and PEUC).

Chart 2: Unique claims filed by month



Status and number of unique weekly claims filed by month. Claimants file claims each week, certifying they are eligible for benefits. These weekly claims are evaluated by ESD. If the claimant is found to be eligible for benefits, ESD issues a payment for that week. A claimant can file multiple claims for different programs, so the number of claims can be higher than the individuals filing. Claimants will be paid from the program for which they are eligible. Pending claims are not paid until any eligibility issues are decided.

Chart 3: Benefits paid (in billions)



Total amount of benefits paid from all unemployment insurance programs including state-funded regular UI and federally funded PUA, PEUC, and FPUC.

Chart 4: Appeals by status

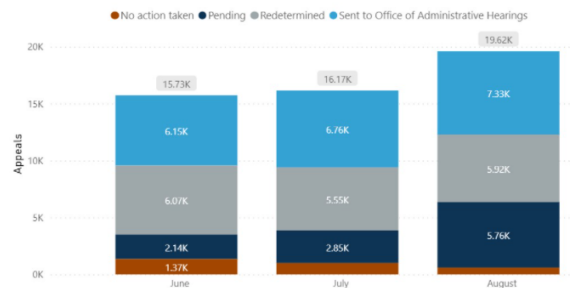
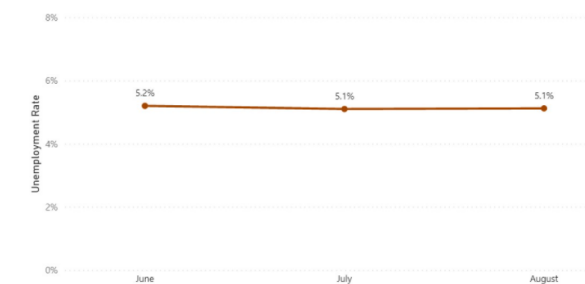


Chart 5: Call center statistics



Chart 6: Seasonally adjusted unemployment rate



Unemployment rate for Washington state by month.

Questions?
